



January 2006

TeleTown Hall



Congressman Dan Lungren

Enclosures:

- List of Benefits
- Press Releases
- Three Scripts Approved by Franking

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Congressman Dan Lungren (3rd District, California)
U.S. House of Representatives
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TeleTown Hall – An Effective Proactive Opportunity to Reach Constituents

Benefits of the TeleTown Hall:

- **Effective use of Members' time**
- **Prudent use of taxpayer dollars**
- **Focus and deliver your message and set the agenda**
- **Cost effective way to connect on a personal level with your constituents**
- **Immediate feedback and identification of opinions**

The following article was published in the *Sacramento Bee* (circulation #'s by subscription Monday-Saturday ~298,900 and Sunday~346,180. There also have been about 399,500 unique visitor hits on the www.sacbee.com website ~every 30 days).

This article was also published in the *Orange County Register*, November 22, 2005 (circulation #'s by subscription Monday-Saturday~ 300,000 and Sunday~357,000. There have also been about 1.5 million unique visitors to www.ocregister.com ~ every 30 days).

The Long Beach Press Telegram published it on November 23, 2005 (circulation #'s by subscription are Monday-Saturday~ 329,000, and Sunday~ 355,000). It was also on the *Scripps Howard Online News Service* November 22, 2005.

Telephonic town hall

Up to 250 listen in on Rep. Dan Lungren's virtual conferences

By David Whitney -- Bee Washington Bureau
Published 2:15 am PST Monday, November 21, 2005

WASHINGTON - Ed Rossier of Citrus Heights had just finished dinner Wednesday and was settling in to watching the television news when Rep. Dan Lungren called to find out if he had any questions.

"I was surprised," said Rossier, a Democrat.

Lungren is surprising a lot of people these days as the Gold River Republican tests new technology for reaching his constituents.

Using a computer link that connects him to a Las Vegas telephone switching network, Lungren can literally dial up tens of thousands of his constituents in a matter of minutes and conduct a town hall meeting with them from the comfort of their own homes.

While most of the calls go into answering machines or result in hang-ups, hundreds of constituents join in for at least part of the session - and they seem to like the exchange.

"This is really great, your forum here," John Taylor of Citrus Heights told the congressman before asking a question about immigration reform.

Even Rossier, who wasn't sure Lungren answered his question about the investigation of the leak of CIA agent Valerie Plame's identity, thinks Lungren might be onto something.

"If this gets information out there, I think it's a good deal," he said.

For Lungren, it's an easy way to stay in touch.

Staring into a computer screen that tells him constantly how many constituents are listening in and automatically queues the next one waiting to ask a question, Lungren answered questions for 80 minutes as easily as if all 627 participants were sitting in his office.

Staying in touch is one of the biggest challenges members of Congress have. The most common way to do it is by sending out mass mailings from Washington or flying out to the district and holding live town hall meetings that require arranging space, mailing invitations and hoping you haven't picked back-to-school night.

"I just thought there must be a way to use technology in a way that costs less," Lungren said.

Lungren is in his first year as a Sacramento-area congressman but retains seniority from a decade representing the Long Beach area in the House before he left to seek state office. He served eight years as California attorney general.

After his election last year to succeed Doug Ose representing the 3rd Congressional District, Lungren regrouped with Rodney Smith, an old friend from their days three decades ago working for the Republican National Committee.

Smith is a direct marketing consultant who signed up Lungren as the first customer of Tele Town Hall Inc. The small startup is seeking a patent on the computer system Lungren is using to hold his virtual town hall.

Smith said that eventually the system will be so smooth that it can be operated without assistance. But on this night, Smith is in constant communication with a colleague monitoring a series of computers in Chicago, which in turn are connected to a data center in Las Vegas that hooks the computers to telephone lines.

When the button is pushed, the system is programmed to dial 25,000 3rd District registered voters - Republicans, Democrats and declined-to-state. To avoid overloading the telephone system, the calls are routed through exchanges all over the country.

When constituents answer the phone, they hear Lungren give a brief welcome and then invite them to join in by pushing a button on their phone.

Not surprisingly, most calls result in hang-ups. On this night, nearly 9,000 calls reached answering machines on which the system automatically delivers a prerecorded message from Lungren.

But 627 people pushed the button to be connected to the conference. For most of the 80-minute session, the actual number of listeners at any given moment numbered more than 200.

"That's about what we would get at a typical town hall out in the district," said Lungren, who has conducted 10 events in person locally so far this year. "The biggest turnout we've ever had is about 250 people, and the smallest was about 50."

The system is still in the testing stage. A minor snafu Wednesday evening just as the calls first started going out may have inadvertently disconnected 34 constituents.

The test was the seventh for the system. Lungren wanted to talk about flood control and even had three questions programmed for an unscientific survey that could be answered with the push of a button.

But of the 15 or so questions Lungren received, flood control wasn't the only thing on constituents' minds. They also asked about immigration, the state of the Republican Party, the investigation into the CIA leak, the state of emergency preparedness and other topics.

Lungren seems pleased with the results.

"From this we get a good sense of what the people are concerned about - what's hot," Lungren said. "There is some persuasion involved in this, but I also want to get a sense of how the people are feeling."

"This is not staged. People don't know I am going to call, and I am reaching them in a setting in which they feel very comfortable - their own home."

Before the tests began, Lungren said, he vetted his experiment through the House committee that oversees office mailings to make sure all rules were being followed. The cost of the Wednesday evening session was about \$1,200 for the telephone calls, which Lungren pays for out of his office account.

Lungren said he is trying the calls at different times of the day to see which produces the best "turnout," but so far time doesn't seem to make much difference.

On Wednesday, Lungren finally pulled the plug on the conference 20 minutes past its scheduled end time, still with 93 people listening and 28 remaining in line to ask a question. They were urged to call his Gold River office with their questions.

Congressman Dan Lungren
Tele-Town Hall
Answering Machine Message Script # 1

Hi. This is Congressman Dan Lungren. I am calling constituents in our 3rd Congressional District to invite them to participate in a live Town Hall meeting conducted over the telephone to discuss current events in the Congress and more local issues such as Sacramento Flood control, proposed upgrades to the Folsom Dam and construction of the new Folsom Bridge. I am sorry that I cannot come to the phone right now, since I am conducting the telephone town hall.

On November 28, 2005, I will be holding a traditional Town Hall Meeting at Empire



Oaks Elementary in Folsom, CA. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. and conclude at 9:00p.m. We will be discussing many of these same issues and I hope that you will be able to attend.

Should you have any questions, please contact my district office at (916) 859-9906. I would also encourage you to visit my website at www.house.gov/lungren.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in the Congress! I regret that I missed you and hope that we will be able to talk and share ideas at Empire Oaks Elementary on November 28!!

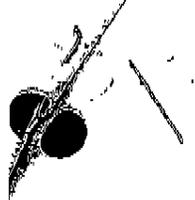
Congressman Dan Lungren
Tele-Town Hall
Answering Machine Message Script # 2

Hi. This is Congressman Dan Lungren.
I am calling constituents in our 3rd
Congressional District to invite them to
participate in a live Town Hall meeting
conducted over the telephone to discuss
current events in the Congress and more
local issues such as Sacramento Flood
control, proposed upgrades to the Folsom
Dam and construction of the new Folsom
Bridge. I am sorry that I cannot come to
the phone right now, since I am conducting
the telephone town hall.

Should you have any questions, please
contact my district office at (916) 859-9906.

I would also encourage you to visit my website at www.house.gov/lungren.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in the Congress! I regret that I missed you and hope that we will be able to talk and share ideas in the future!!



Congressman Dan Lungren
Tele-Town Hall
Answering Machine Message Script # 3

Hi. This is Congressman Dan Lungren.
I am currently calling constituents in our 3rd
Congressional District to invite them to
participate in a live Town Hall meeting
conducted over the telephone.

If you **press 1** on your phone, you will be
instantly joined to my live toll-free
Telephone Town Hall meeting that is *being
conducted now.*

I would enjoy the opportunity and privilege
to discuss with you the current events in the
Congress and more local issues such as
Sacramento Flood control, proposed

upgrades to the Folsom Dam and construction of the new Folsom Bridge.

Again, to join me on this live toll-free Telephone Town Hall Meeting regarding issues that are important to you, ***please press 1 now.*** Once you have joined the call by **pressing 1**, press the pound key to ask me a question.

If you prefer to talk with me in the future, please feel free to call my Gold River office at 916-859-9906.